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*Jahiri Seidu*



## Tanzania: Time for a change

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# Tanzania: Time for a change



Its all smiles for President Nyerere and his heir apparent Prime Minister Salim Ahmed Salim.

**President Julius Nyerere has said that he will not stand again for office. And with Premier Sokoine's death, Salim Ahmed Salim is the man expected to succeed. Anver Versi analyses the Tanzanian situation and tells why it is time for a change.**

THERE was an unusually deep and profound sense of sorrow when Edward Moringe Sokoine, late Prime Minister of Tanzania was buried. "He was a good man," whispered one permanent secretary, "but maybe he tried too hard". Sokoine, a Masai, had launched the traumatic anti-*magendo* (smuggling) blitz that had shaken the urban business community to its roots. In the process, he had made many enemies and it was thus hardly surprising that rumour attributed his accident to either a plot (see separate story) or the dreaded *Ndumba* (witchcraft).

Yet mourning for Sokoine was genuine for he was indeed a good man who was only doing his job. But, as one journalist wryly pointed out, if you have built your house on quicksand, it hardly matters if you manage to flush out the woodworm. Sokoine's job, as he saw it was precisely that, ridding the country of corruption, hunting out all the bugs, big and small that were infesting the framework of the nation. But what the nation really needed, a member of parliament said in an aside, was firm foundations. "The economy must improve", an MP emphasised, "we need a change".

Julius Nyerere appears to agree. He has announced emphatically that he will give up the presidency in 1985 to "concentrate on

the party". But Nyerere is not withdrawing from the presidency because his policies have failed; he is doing so as a logical conclusion to the process that began 16 years ago with the Arusha Declaration. The shift in Nyerere's stance, party officials insist, has not been forced by circumstance – it is a deliberate and calculated move to reinforce Tanzania's socialism.

**The late Premier Edward Sokoine – killed in his prime.**



Tanzania and Nyerere have always provided meat to political analysts; the latest developments are likely to absorb them for several years yet. Despite its woeful economic performance, Tanzania has the highest literacy rate in Africa and has consistently produced leaders of outstanding calibre. National pride and identity are perhaps stronger in Tanzania than anywhere else in Africa and, despite everything, to quote Nyerere himself, "we have survived".

By the yardstick that Nyerere applies, Tanzania has succeeded where other African nations have failed. His three major objectives, economic self-reliance, support for liberation movements and a truly non-aligned stance have been pursued with a single-minded determination. In two of these he has succeeded. By steadfastly refusing to join either the Eastern or Western camps, Nyerere has won for Tanzania international respect and also large amounts of aid from both blocks. He has been foremost in supporting the liberation movements both materially and morally. However now that the Nkomati Accord has been signed, Tanzania will probably feel less obliged to commit itself so wholeheartedly to the liberation struggle.

The one sector where Nyerere's socialism

appears to have failed totally is in the economy. Despite an impressive growth rate of five per cent in the 1970s, Tanzania is today the 18th poorest country in the world. Severe drought after several years of flooding knocked away the fragile agricultural props and chronic foreign exchange shortages have stunted industrial growth. Even more ominous for Nyerere was the rampant black-marketeering and corruption that came in the wake of acute shortages. "As long as we can maintain our self respect and integrity as a people", he said, "we cannot fail to succeed". When it appeared to him that this integrity was being threatened, he unleashed the anti-corruption squads and when he felt the national unity was under threat, he invoked the Preventive Detention Act.

Economic problems still loom large. To service debts alone, Tanzania needs some 15,000m shillings over the 1983/4 period with export earnings projected at only 7,567m shillings. The Structural Adjustment Plan, instituted in 1983 has tilted more resources to agriculture but by last year, only half the projected targets had been achieved. Although producer prices have been increased to encourage smallholders, the poor infrastructure and a clumsy bureaucracy have tended to cancel out all the positive gains.

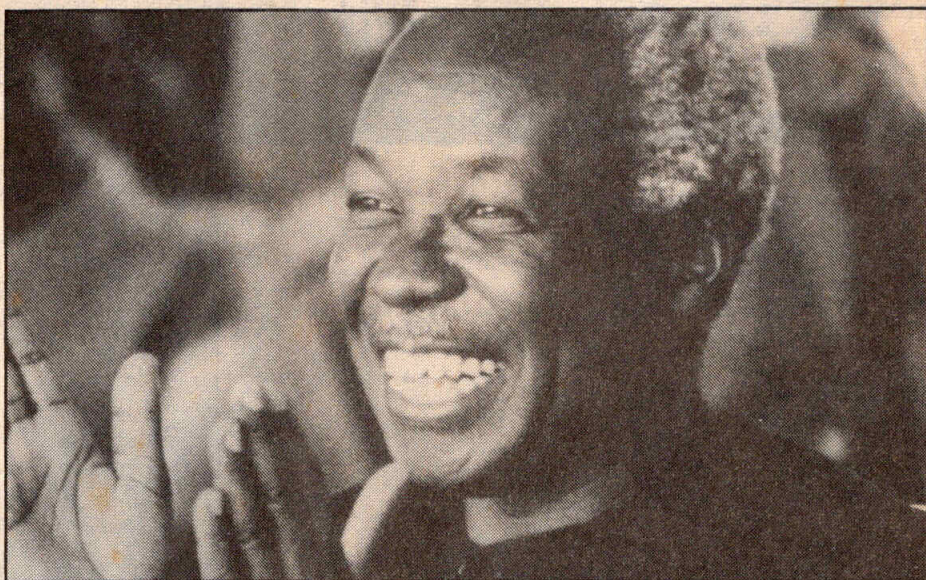
The *ujamaa* projects have again been hamstrung by people's reluctance to move to unfamiliar areas and again, an ineffective bureaucracy. In fact the parastatals which have replaced private enterprise are the chief culprits for production and distribution bottlenecks.

### New Premier

Given the scale of Tanzania's economic problems, even the most optimistic citizen cannot expect an upturn overnight. Besides, Nyerere warned in the 1970s that the path of socialism the country was following was an arduous one and that positive results could not be expected for at least 20 to 25 years. What changes can the common man hope for then?

Perhaps the most significant political development has been the appointment of Salim Ahmed Salim to the premiership. Salim's extraordinary diplomatic and United Nations achievements have been well enough documented. At home he is popular with young radicals and the older peasantry. More important, he is a Zanzibari who has strong support on the mainland. If, as it appears likely, Nyerere is grooming him to take over the presidency in a year's time, Salim's Zanzibari and Islamic background will be a major plus factor.

A Zanzibari-born President on the mainland is likely to quell the groundswell of resentment against the union government. Anti-unionists will have little ground



**No matter what people may think about Nyerere's political views and theories, they all agree that he has a really warm, friendly personality.**

for claims that the mainland is trying to swallow up the islands. Salim is also likely to make friends out of former enemies. Wolfgang Duardo who was detained by Nyerere following the rumpus caused by Aboud Jumbe's resignation has now been freed and it seems certain that he will be incorporated in the decision making machinery on the islands.

Zanzibar's new President, Ali Hassan Mwinyi has already been demonstrating a marked difference of approach to the public from his predecessor Aboud Jumbe. Mwinyi has been assiduously wooing the Zanzibari confidence with persuasive logic rather than laying down the law as Jumbe did. He has also been cultivating the Islamic sentiments of the majority of the islanders, thus establishing a clear recognition of the religion within the union government. If Salim does become President, the islanders are most likely to feel well satisfied. Zanzibari exiled groups who could well bury the hatchet and return to a normal life in the islands. Mwinyi has already indicated that he is willing to forgive and forget and has as much as offered exiles a welcome should they choose to return.

On the mainland, Salim is regarded as a man of outstanding ability. He came within a whisker of becoming the first African Secretary-General of the United Nations and is regarded in diplomatic circles as one of the major statesmen of the world. These are impressive enough credentials but Salim has been as careful to cultivate a balanced image at home as abroad. He is a powerful, persuasive speaker, relying more on humour and logic than on rhetoric. In a country that seems to produce a crop of excellent public speakers every week, Salim's reputation is second only to that of Nyerere.

During his premiership, Salim will certainly push Tanzania further onto the world stage. As foreign minister he established deep bonds with both the Eastern and Western blocks. Insiders believe that Salim, with the tacit approval of Nyerere will now travel the West for joint ventures of the same magnitude as the Tan-Zam railway. He is also believed to approve of free enterprise and many Tanzanians feel that the next year will see a definite shift to freer trading and greater individual incentive. Now that the border with Kenya has been opened, Tanzanians want a greater share in trading and less interference from the parastatals.

The oil producing Arab countries are also likely to figure much more prominently in Tanzania's economy over the next couple of years. A full 60 per cent of the country's income goes on fuel and if Salim can negotiate long-term soft loans with the producers, Tanzania's recovery might be much quicker than anticipated.

### Party duties

What will Nyerere do when he gives up the Presidency? He has stated that he will concentrate on the party, particularly the youth wingers. By pulling himself out of the mainstream of political rough and tumble, Nyerere will be able to concentrate on wider policy formation from the grassroots. He still believes passionately that the peasantry are the key for self-sufficiency and he also believes that ideology can be as useful as bread in forging a new nation. According to one of his long time friends, Nyerere now sees himself as a Ghandi figure, the Great Teacher who will withdraw to his country roots and dispense wisdom to the younger men to whom he had entrusted the future of the nation. ■

# Nyerere symbol of Africa

**Julius Nyerere is symbolic of Africa's hopes and aspirations. Andrew Lycett stresses his importance in the history of the continent and examines his contribution over more than two decades.**

PRESIDENT NYERERE'S decision to step down as the Tanzanian Head of State is a milestone. It marks the passing of an era. For Nyerere is one of the very last of the African leaders who came to power in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He guided his country to nationhood, he attempted to change the economic structure of his poor but relatively populous people by introducing collective villagisation, he promoted the principles of Third World socialism and self-reliance on the world stage, most notably through the Arusha Declaration of 1967.

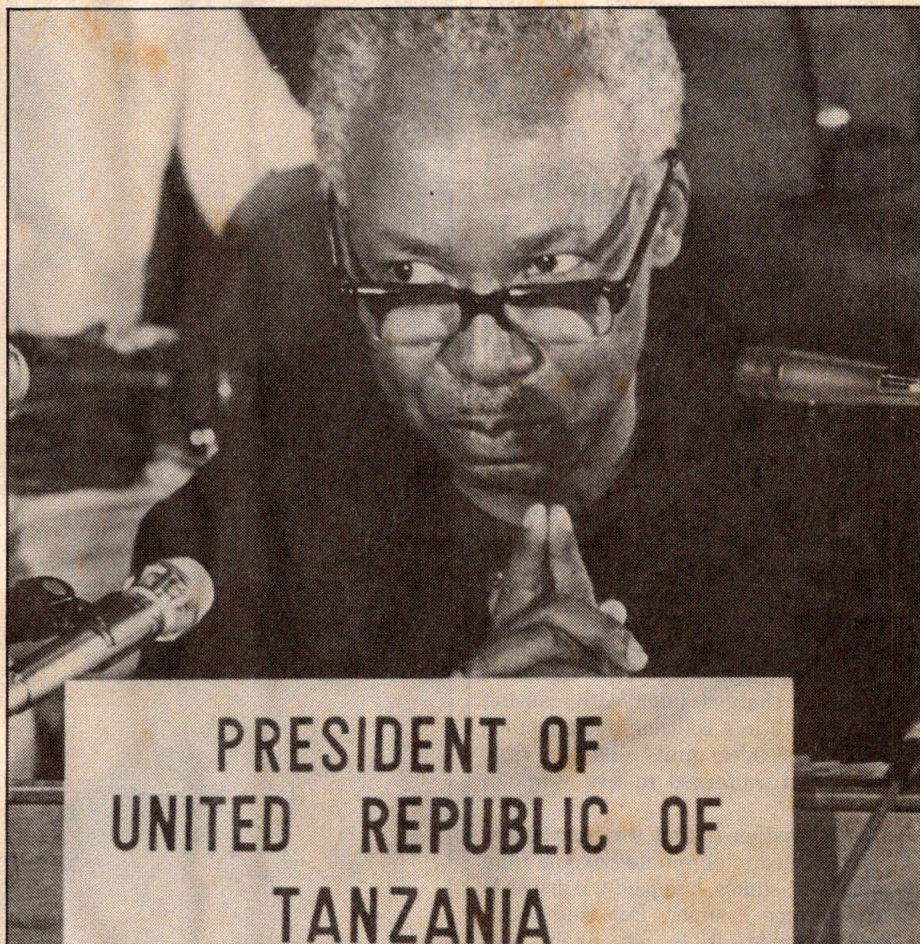
In the process he became first the darling of Western intellectuals, who were impressed by his attempts to develop his country, and then the *bête noir* of the clearly discernible right wing backlash, which engulfed Europe and the United States towards the end of the 1970s.

Mwalimu Julius Nyerere ("the teacher") became cruelly maligned as Tanzania's commodity based economy floundered following *Ujamaa* and collectivisation and recession in the industrialised world. Tanzania fell deeply into debt and had to endure the stringent medicine of the IMF and the World Bank to avoid becoming completely paralysed.

Nyerere withheld an announced resignation on one previous occasion. But this time he has decided to go, clearly disillusioned at the turn of events. It is not just Tanzania's economy that is going wrong, but all the vaguely idealistic initiatives with which he has been associated – from a "socialist" Obote government for Uganda, to union with Zanzibar.

Yet this self-effacing 'failure' may still be looked back on as one of the most important figures in post-colonial African history. For while his contemporaries in, say, Zaire and Kenya were bent on becoming rich by orthodox economic policies Nyerere was genuinely trying to evolve a political and economic development strategy for the African continent. He may have been wrong to force people to leave their villages for the hazy greater good of the community. But he was at least attempting to evolve some method, based on the principle of self-reliance, in which materially poor Africans could operate in a hostile world economy.

Elsewhere Nyerere was scrupulous in



**He tried to find an entirely new way forward for Africa, but he was on the frontiers of social change and practice did not live up to the theory.**

following up his firmly held conviction in the unity and integrity of Africa. A strong believer in the OAU and its principle of the inviolability of frontiers, the Tanzania leader showed not half-baked liberalism, but steely resolve in making the best of circumstances as he found them. As he wrote in 1973, "We must use the existing pattern of states as an instrument for

## Unifying Africa

unifying Africa and not as an instrument for dividing Africa". And when principles were violated as over Rhodesia and South Africa, Dar es Salaam became the 'capital' of the liberation movements of the front-line states, just as more recently it put

itself in the vanguard of the armed struggle to overthrow the brutal dictator Idi Amin in Uganda. Nyerere's strengths and (yes) successes in this area tend to be overlooked.

But little can make up for the disappointment felt by many who may not necessarily have supported Nyerere in his radical, collectivist ways. Tanzania has not been a success economically by any yardstick.

Nyerere, the mixture of British university trained realist and African visionary, tried to guide his country and the continent as a whole to some kind of internal resilience and spirit of compromise with the wide world. But it did not work. And the hurt is felt far and wide. For Nyerere's failure is also the failure of Africa. ■

**Tanzania's Prime Minister, Edward Sokoine died in a mysterious car crash on April 12. Public evidence suggests it was the result of careless driving. But was that all? Are we sure he was not assassinated? New African examines the curious death of a Prime Minister.**

EDWARD MURINGA SOKOINE was Tanzania's Prime Minister, and the man most widely tipped to succeed Julius Nyerere as President when he finally laid down the mantle of office.

Sokoine was young (46) experienced (he had been in successive cabinets since 1972 and was a second generation politician) and a Masai not involved in any major tribal rivalry. He was also clearly the choice of Nyerere himself as the man he would like to succeed him.

But Sokoine had plenty of enemies and challengers particularly among the Tanzanian old guard and those who felt that they had been by-passed in the search for an heir. They also thought that they were "senior" and longer serving. They thought that they had borne the brunt of the independence struggle and were being poorly rewarded for their years of loyalty.

Then suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, Sokoine was killed in a still not fully explained car crash.

The unchallenged facts are that Sokoine's death occurred on April 12 when he was returning to Dar es Salaam from the new capital, Dodoma. He was being driven in a Mercedes Benz in a motorcade with several other cars. The driver was Dumisani Dube a member of the African National Congress, who came from a nearby ANC camp.

Dube was charged later with causing Sokoine's death in a collision by dangerous driving. He pleaded guilty and was duly convicted and sentenced to five years in goal.

One explanation is that someone at the top, who wanted to eliminate Sokoine from the succession stakes, had paid the driver to kill the former Premier. But this seems scarcely possible. It is not likely that anyone, except a suicide case, could be paid enough money to crash a car and kill himself as well as his victim.

### No accident

But several reliable Tanzanian sources insist that Sokoine's death was no accident. They say that the accident was staged by the driver whose job was simply to bring the car screeching to a halt, with the rest of the motorcade piling up behind. In the confusion Sokoine was to be shot by another hired assassin.

The former premier had become the government spokesman on many issues and had spearheaded the border reopening between Kenya and Tanzania after consultation with Nyerere. He was also the man who spearheaded the campaign against smugglers, which made him many enemies.

## MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF EDWARD SOKOINE



**The late Prime Minister Edward Sokoine in a contemplative mood. He was tipped for succession before he was suddenly and violently removed from the political scene.**

Sokoine is also said to have instigated the — Monduli, northern Tanzania, he was seen to return of the former Kenya Air Force soldiers to Kenya *without* consulting Nyerere. He had become so powerful that he was taking important decisions on his own and, already sure of succeeding Nyerere, he wanted to have better relations with Tanzania's neighbours, hence his decision to send back the runaway soldiers.

A member of the Masai tribe from

— have close affinity with the present Kalenjin leadership in Kenya. It is also suggested that when the former Kenyan Minister for Culture and Social Services, Stanley Oloiptip, crossed the border to Tanzania, he met Sokoine, a Masai like himself. But Oloiptip denied all this.

Being so sure of himself, Sokoine sparked off another row with former Premier,

Cleopa Msuya, who had been already relieved of that powerful position. In the crackdown on economic saboteurs Msuya, one of the wealthiest Tanzanians, threatened to resign when Sokoine ordered the police to begin investigations.

This hostility towards Sokoine from a number of politicians especially from Kilimanjaro and Arusha led to the attempted coup by junior officers, mainly from the Haya tribe in Bukoba, early this year. It automatically appeared that Sokoine had become a stumbling block in the way of powerful people in the higher echelons of the party.

One of them was Rashidi Kawawa, a man whose brother, Jaffir Rashid Kawawa was jailed for five years on October 10, 1982 for taking a bribe of Tshs.20,000 at Mwanza, where he was an immigration officer.

### Kawawa's choice

The big argument came over the system to be used in choosing the successor of Nyerere. It is understood that Kawawa wanted the choice to be with the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the CCM while Sokoine, sure of himself, wanted the decision to be taken by the people through the ballot box.

The NEC is made up mostly of "old politicians" calling themselves "Elders" and Kawawa is said to be close to them.

Sokoine was relatively powerful and popular with people and given the fact that he travelled extensively throughout the country and listened to their feelings had made Kawawa extremely jittery.

A rift is said to have developed between Sokoine and Kawawa during one of the

**Former Vice President Kawawa appears to have lost the fight to become President**



**The late Prime Minister, giving a press conference to newsmen, before his death in the mysterious car crash on the Dodoma road.**

NEC meetings and Nyerere is said to have sided with Sokoine because he is said to have scant respect for Kawawa's intellect or ability. Kawawa took this hard.

Kawawa with the support of his allies like Msuya and Regional Party Secretaries managed to mobilise themselves against Sokoine's crackdown on economic saboteurs and racketeers. They succeeded, because most prominent individuals netted in the dragnet and locked up, were eventually released for lack of hard evidence.

Since then the political arena has been divided among the mainlanders. In fact an attempt was made on the life of one of Sokoine's tribesman. The Dar es Salaam party secretary who had for very many months suppressed several moves initiated by Sokoine's enemies to hold rallies, was almost assassinated.

So Sokoine's death came as no surprise to many Tanzanians in the know, at least those who understood the in-fighting in the party.

### Why ANC?

The hiring of an ANC driver was believed to have been strategically planned so that no particular tribe or group suffering from the crackdown on economic saboteurs would be blamed for it.

One of the rumours that gripped the country came in February this year when the Court of Appeal Judge, Justice Yona Mwakasendo, died under \*mysterious circumstances at Muhimbili Hospital, in Dar es Salaam.

Although Mwakasendo had been sickly for some time it was suggested that because he supported Sokoine he should be dealt with immediately. He had angered Sokoine's opponents when he addressed

members of the bar and judges, to say that anybody who acquired wealth and other material benefits at the expense of the common man, should be dealt with ruthlessly.

### Shockwaves

This sent shockwaves through Sokoine's opponents. Mwakasendo headed the Court of Appeal and had wide influence on the judicial system, so many people in influential places, who were obvious targets of the crackdown, felt threatened.

Mwakasendo was then taken ill. Apparently he had been injected with a dangerous drug and died. It was interesting that the report from Muhimbili merely states he died of 'complicated malaria'.

Because Nyerere appeared to have trusted Sokoine so much it is believed that the 'old fox' is also fed up with socialism and is keen for a change. He was about to change cleverly by allowing Sokoine to dominate the scene and then let him take all responsibility. Curiously, immediately Sokoine was reappointed Prime Minister, Tanzania invited foreign investors back and readily compensated Lonrho for their nationalised properties.

Nyerere then decided to move towards the West in order to improve a faltering economy, a move that was widely applauded and welcomed by Tanzanians who were aware of the failure of *Ujamaa*.

The rumours and fears that shrouded the death of Sokoine resulted in Nyerere promoting Salim Ahmed Salim, to Prime Minister from the Foreign Office. Chances of Salim succeeding Nyerere had looked doubtful because he is from Zanzibar and is of Arab descent, but now he is a front runner. ■